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DATE RECEIVED: 4/29/19
FROM: Elliot Foley
PHONE OR EMAIL:

To Whom it May Concern,

I was reading the paper, particularly "In Opposition of Expansion," and it included the surprising detail that of hundreds of public comments regarding the landfill expansion there were only two pieces of written testimony in favor of the landfill expansion. I am writing today to make that three. I want to provide counterargument for all of the, in my opinion, flimsy, selfish, and evil arguments presented in opposition to expansion as written in the article, as well as provide a few additional positive arguments in support of expansion.

Teardown:

The first argument listed in the Gazette-Times article was the smell. In particular, residents have complained that the smell has become worse. Obviously. It is a landfill, and full landfills produce higher volumes of bad smell than less-full landfills. However, this is an extremely [illegible] I remember going to Coffin Butte landfill as a school field trip about 5 years ago, and the emanation area of the smell was not that far. The vast, vast majority of Benton County residents have never and will never smell the landfill, all the while reaping the rewards.

The second argument concerned leaching. Leachate is certainly an issue deserving of concern, but denying this landfill expansion does literally nothing to ever combat it. Leaching happens when rain water runs through landfills, full of trash. Their argument goes that since Benton County gets so much rain, we should use a different area as a landfill. As far as post-hoc justifications go, this might seem pretty reasonable. However, the trash doesn't just disappear; it will be taken to other counties. There are two possibilities here, both of them grim. Firstly, if the new landfill location is near this county, then the rainfall situation doesn't get any better. In this situation, we would have been better off just expanding our own landfill location to make the leaching containment simpler and less risky. The other possibility is that the landfill location is far away from Benton County. While this might help with leaching, it runs the risk of causing great financial harm to the people of Benton County by significantly increasing their trash removal costs.

There were a few additional arguments listed in the article, but they were either so inconsequential (a wildlife area is noisy) or required additional data to refute that would take me some more serious time to precisely refute (misalignment of Benton County priorities or accusations of misreporting data). As such, I will skip these and advance on to make my case for expansion.

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Build up:

As a Boulder County resident for all my life, I have always appreciated Republic Services. They haven't ever missed my trash, and they have been easy to work with. However, it was only when I moved out that I began to fully realize how great we have it here. Paying my bills for the first time, I dreaded the electricity bill, hated the gas bill in the winter, despised rent (although what can I really do about that). The one bill that always stayed low and reasonable was my trash bill. Right now, a horde of NIMBYs are trying to lobby MY local government to make garbage trucks go hours out of this way, indubitably raising all of our collective garbage bills. I say no. I support our incredible, reliable trash collection. I support the dignity of the people who might not be able to afford this unwarranted price raise. Maybe these folks with their mortgages and [illegible] can afford to kick out their guys with higher bills, but I think I speak for all of us who are young and/or poor when I say that this is not appreciated. Keep our prices affordable, and don't fall for the post-hoc rationalizations of greedy selfish people who cry because their homes smell. Please, allow the landfill expansion on Coffin Butte.

Best,

Elliot Foley